Surára
Pakidái
Shiriana

/74 cont./

6. Tribute payments and greeting ceremonial

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Two or three times a year a Xiriána chief and 18-20 warriors of this tribe come to the Surára as well as to the Pakidái, in order to collect tribute from their satellites (see also pp. 13 and 19). This visit is always carried out /75/ according to a regular protocol. First the chiefs squat down opposite each other, place the right hand on the left shoulder of the other, and hold the left hand in front of the mouth. They remain in this position for about two hours and, singing, exchange their news (345). The warriors of

345. I, too, was greeted in this fashion by the Surára chief as well as by the Pakidái chief.

the Xiriána and Surára or Pakidái stand around in a circle and listen, their faces immobile. All the women and children remain lying in their hammocks during the ceremonial, or they sit with anxious faces by their hearths. When the greeting is ended, the Surára or the Pakidái chief makes a sign, whereupon his men run off and fetch knives, axes, pots, etc., and also bananas and pupunha fruits, which they put down in front of the Xiriána chief. The latter picks up the objects and distributes them to his warriors, one after the other. When each is richly laden, they leave the maloka with measured step and disappear into the forest. The Xiriána chief is now the only one left behind. For him, however, particularly valuable objects must be brought. Above all, it is now the duty of the Surára or Pakidái chief to offer precious things of his own, perhaps a woven hammock which was given him by civilized people, a large pot, a bush knife, or a particularly beautiful chain of glass beads. Along with these, he usually sets down a basket of bananas and pupunha fruits. When the Xiriána chief, finally satisfied, nods his head, the Surára or Pakidái at last feel relieved. There is now a concluding dialogue sung by the two chiefs, whereupon the Xiriána chief rises and, heavily loaded for his part, strides toward the forest where his warriors are

/75 cont./
619 already waiting for him. After such a visit, the Surára and Pakidái
651 are thoroughly stripped, but at least the constraint under which
576 they were put during these hours has been removed, and one soon
574 hears them laughing and joking again (346).

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346. For traveling investigators who come into contact with tribes of this region it is also very important to make sure, in offering presents and trade articles, that valuable objects are held back at first, because the chief always takes his share last. A visitor who is not familiar with this mentality and stands empty-handed at the end would incur the enmity of the chief and thus of the entire tribe from the outset.

## 7. Making a Living

433 a) General
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241 At present the Surára and Pakidái are in a state of transition from an exploitative to a productive economy. The traditional means of acquiring food, hunting and gathering, still played a dominant role among these Indians at the time of my visit, but I could see that most of the members of the tribe, especially the men, already manifested a great interest in agriculture, which had been introduced a generation or two before. The chiefs in particular proved to be shining models, for they set a good example in all the work in the roça (forest clearing) (347). According to their

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347. The myth about the origin of the banana (see p. 249) clearly shows that the Surára and Pakidái were formerly only hunters and gatherers.

Surára
Pakidái

/116 cont./

123 touched me all over my body, and they examined my spectacles with particular interest (557) and were very astonished at my

557. The Surára chief was so enthusiastic about my spectacles that he asked me to be sure to bring him a pair on my next visit.

blond hair and blue eyes. When I shaved, I was likewise surrounded by a circle of spectators (558). Even when I had to re-

558. Similar experiences were had by Chaffanjon among the Kunuaná (Chaffanjon, 1889, pp. 267/68), Koch-Grünberg among the Taulipang and Makuxí /Macusi/ (Koch-Grünberg, 1923a, p. 360), and Baldus among the Tapirapé (Baldus, 1956b, p. 606).

lieve myself, I was asked where I was going, and often I was joined by companions.

191 When the Surára and Pakidái see something new for the first time or if they like an object particularly well, they
521 manifest their approval by loud clickings. They love conversa-
• [576] tion above all else, and even at night they go on talking for hours. They never interrupt each other, however.

593 Though the man is the head of the family, the wife is
692 regarded as his partner with equal rights, without whose advice he does not undertake anything important. If he has two or
595 more wives, the youngest usually leads a princess's existence,
593 for which even the older ones must contribute. Mistreatment of women occurs only on account of adultery and for reasons of jealousy. But if a man beats his wife or draws blood on her body with the little cutia-tooth knife, several companions of her own sex immediately hasten to her aid. They try to pin down the arms of the angry man, and one woman will attempt to seize his scrotum and squeeze it with all her might, so that

Surára
Pakidái

/116 cont./

593 he soon loses all desire for further mistreatment. The other members of the tribe watch such a spectacle with interest. Moreover, it is worth noting that most of the women are very energetic and can scold with persistence. If a woman is angry with her husband, perhaps because he was unfaithful or did not go hunting, she will often scold loudly to herself for hours, so that all the other occupants of the maloka hear every word. [572] Meanwhile, however, the man being scolded remains lying in hammock in stoic calm, for a scolding woman may never be 578 interrupted. But between women, too, there are sometimes regular cannonades of vituperation carried on with the greatest vocal display. I always had the impression that at any moment they would come to blows. Sometimes this actually happens. Then they pull one another by the hair and strike each other in the face and on the rest of the body with the hands. /117/ In this case, other women do not interfere, nor do the men. Everybody watches calmly and waits until the scuffle is over.

855 Children are treated with special love and tenderness. In most cases, they show their gratitude to their parents by bestow-
888 ing upon them everlasting affection. I never saw old people neglected (559). If they became so weak and ill that they were

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559. Baldus also reports of the Tapirapé that the old people are very well treated there (Baldus, 1956, p. 603), whereas later Giacone paints a very gloomy picture in this respect about the Tukano: "Entre os índios dêsses rios, a condição dos velhos é das mais penosas .... Poderíamos dizer, sem medo de errar, que o velho ou a velha, quando não pode mais trabalhar para a família, é considerado como bananeira que já deu cacho, e ninguem terá compaixão deles... /Among the Indians of these rivers the situation of the old people is most painful .... We might say, without fear of error, that the old man or old woman, when

6: Vinci T-5 (1950) 1959 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18
Sanema



'*Anai*,' I said. '*Anami*, yes' (where in a European tongue one would say 'no'). 'Yes, there is nothing to eat on the Uagua. People die there of hunger. . . .' and I gave a burlesque performance of a person dying of hunger.

This tickled them, and the first three of them went off—in these parts there are no greetings and no farewells. The remaining Samatari stayed looking at us without a word, and in his expression there seemed to be a longing—to follow us, to live with us, among all our marvels, over there on the Merevari and even further, along the great river with its rapids. But still he said nothing. We were putting our things together. He followed us with his eyes. Then, after peering at Enrico and me, he went over to Uaremu and said something which made all the Shiriana smile. In a second, he was gone, running off with his bow and arrows at the trail, to catch up with his comrades.

'What did the boy say?' I asked Uaremu, who had started off along the well-beaten track.

'Nothing. He said he'd never have thought he would see men like you.'

Once more we were on our own. We had regained our liberty, but in place of the happiness it should have brought a certain melancholy descended upon us. We felt that we had left something behind, over there on the Uraricoera, and more especially among the Samatari themselves, that howling tribe of pygmies, bad men, Mongolians, and girlish types (our own definitions for the four groups into which they could be divided)—among whom we had left a little of ourselves. And that last youngster's phrase stuck in our minds. It was like the whole burden of a speech we had interrupted before it was finished—or rather, when it was scarcely begun.

Hashimo set the pace. It was a steady one, and infernally fast—he wanted to get home without losing a second, so that we were left with no time for sadness. We were kept far too busy. We footslogged all that day, finishing up what little meat we had left, and eking it out with a little fruit now and then.

Once more we slept in a familiar camp, on the river-bank, where the Guayca made a vain attempt to catch fish. No wild life was to be seen: the recent march of the Samatari had destroyed, or disturbed, all the animals in the district and the survivors would have fled up into the surrounding heights. Hunger began to rise in us like a tide, threatening to submerge us: and all the time Enrico was suffering from some explosive intestinal worms he had contracted from some rotten fruit he had eaten. This worried us because we had no remedy for it, and the sufferer's signs of distress were so evident that the Guayca were highly amused.

/471 cont./

551 When a person is called by his own name, he frequently returns the insult by calling the offender by his own name.

/472/ The names of persons are distinguished by their masculine or feminine suffixes, in such a way that he can always be sure to which sex the person referred to belongs, even though this might not have been known. The names which end in "-wa" are masculine, and those which end in "-mi" or in "-ma" are feminine.

552 Dogs are also given proper names. Their names are distinguished by the endings for the gender. Other domestic animals rarely receive a proper name and rather are called monkey, parrot, etc.

Relations between Persons

576 The greatest compliment which can generally be made to another person who has acquired a new object is to say: "Give me that." The usual reply is: "No." Such a person is highly pleased to know that he has acquired something desired by another.

574 591 When a visitor (or group of visitors) comes to visit a settlement, he stays outside and decorates himself with painting, feathers, etc. Then, when the inhabitants of the settlement see him coming, they break out in applause. The visitor enters the interior patio of the settlement and stands with his head thrown back, holding his bow and arrows out in front, resting vertically on the ground. When he is invited to enter a house, he goes to it and lies down in a hammock on his back, with his head back, remaining motionless for ten to twenty minutes. (A person who frequently visits the settlement knows the house in which he will be well received and goes to it without waiting to be invited.)

574 Once the visitor has rested, he is offered some food. As soon as he finishes eating, and sometimes even before, he breaks his silence and begins to talk with the group which has gathered around him in order to watch him. Then he remains in this same house, where he is given food as long as his visit lasts. They never think of charging him for the food, but an undesirable visitor is either not invited or advised to leave.

11: Chagnon E-5 (1964-1968) 1968 SQ18 Yanomama SQ18



for my complicated storage process. I was able to last most of the day on *café con leche*, heavily sugared espresso coffee diluted about five to one with hot milk. I would prepare this in the evening and store it in a thermos. Frequently, my single meal was no more complicated than a can of sardines and a package of crackers. But at least two or three times a week I would do something sophisticated, like make oatmeal or boil rice and add a can of tuna fish or tomato paste to it. I even saved time by devising a water system that obviated the trips to the river. I had a few sheets of zinc roofing brought in and made a rain-water trap; I caught the water on the zinc surface, funneled it into an empty gasoline drum, and then ran a plastic hose from the drum to my hut. When the drum was exhausted in the dry season, I hired the Indians to fill it with water from the river.

I ate much less when I traveled with the Indians to visit other villages. Most of the time my travel diet consisted of roasted or boiled green plantains (see Glossary) that I obtained from the Indians, but I always carried a few cans of sardines with me in case I got lost or stayed away longer than I had planned. I found peanut butter and crackers a very nourishing food, and a simple one to prepare on trips. It was nutritious and portable, and only one tool was required to prepare the meal, a hunting knife that could be cleaned by wiping the blade on a leaf. More importantly, it was one of the few foods the Indians would let me eat in relative peace. It looked too much like animal feces to them to excite their appetites.

I once referred to the peanut butter as the dung of cattle. They found this quite repugnant. They did not know what "cattle" were, but were generally aware that I ate several canned products of such an animal. I perpetuated this myth, if for no other reason than to have some peace of mind while I ate. Fieldworkers develop strange defense mechanisms, and this was one of my own forms of adaptation. On another occasion I was eating a can of frankfurters and growing very weary of the demands of one of my guests for a share in my meal. When he asked me what I was eating, I replied: "Beef." He then asked, "What part of the animal are you eating?" to which I replied, "Guess!" He stopped asking for a share.

Meals were a problem in another way. Food sharing is important to the Yąnomamö in the context of displaying friendship. "I am hungry," is almost a form of greeting with them. I could not possibly have brought enough food with me to feed the entire village, yet they seemed not to understand this. All they could see was that I did not share my food with them at each and every meal. Nor could I enter into their system of reciprocities with respect to food; every time one of them gave me something "freely," he would dog me for months to pay him back, not with food, but with steel tools. Thus, if I accepted a plantain from someone in a different village while I was on a visit, he would most likely visit me in the future and demand a machete as payment for the time that he "fed" me. I usually reacted to these kinds of demands by giving a banana, the customary reciprocity in their culture—food for food—but this would be a disappointment for the individual who had visions of that single plantain growing into a machete over time.

Despite the fact that most of them knew I would not share my food with them at their request, some of them always showed up at my hut during mealtime. I gradually became accustomed to this and learned to ignore their persistent demands while I ate. Some of them would get angry because I failed to give in, but most of them accepted

*amaamo* on other occasions, but invariably do so on the day the plantains are hung in the village in anticipation of a feast.) Every evening the men are away on their *hemimou*, the week-long hunt, the young women and girls sing and dance in the village to insure them success.

The hunters left at dawn the following morning, carrying a large supply of roasted and green plantains with them to eat while they hunted. They had picked a site some 25 miles up the Mavaca River for their hunt, as game was known to abound there. Their task was to obtain monkeys, armadillos, wild turkeys, wild pig, tapir or sloth, the only meat deemed worthy to give to guests. They would not be permitted to eat any of this game, but could consume any other game they captured, such as deer, small birds, a small species of wild turkey, or insects and fish they happened to come upon. The feast meat, however, was earmarked for the guests and could not be eaten by the hunters. On this particular hunting trip the men miscalculated the amount of food they would need to sustain them during the hunt, and one of them returned after four days to fetch more plantains. He also gave Kąobawä a report on the hunt's success, creating a small sensation in the village: They had already killed a large number of *kaabo*, a particularly large and very desirable monkey. They had also come upon a quantity of turtle eggs at a sand bar and were eating as many as they could. When they returned later, they cached the remaining eggs in my house, so as not to have to share them with the visitors.

Meanwhile, the visitors were making gluttons of themselves, and the hosts started to grumble about the large number of plantains they had already eaten. The week's supply they originally provided had been consumed in half that time, and the guests had been given permission a second time to harvest more from their hosts' gardens. This was no way for guests to behave, and it soon became apparent that they were intimidating Kąobawä's group. Still, he and his followers continued to supply them with all the food they needed, keeping their complaints to themselves. They did not want it to be known that they were worried about running short of food. Instead, they planned to conduct the feast on a scale that would be difficult to reciprocate.

The hunters returned and presented their catch to Kąobawä. It was brought to his house and placed on the ground, wrapped up in leaves. Kąobawä ignored it for a while and then slowly began to unpack it (see Fig. 4-1) while everybody watched—especially the hunters, who were quite proud of the quantity of meat they had obtained: seventeen *kaabo* monkeys, seven wild turkeys, and three large armadillos. Hunting trips are not usually this successful, but the hunters had fortunately stumbled into a large band of *kaabo* and had nearly wiped it out.

Kąobawä and his group were anxious to conduct the feast for their visitors and present them with the food, because by so doing the visitors would be obliged to leave for home, thereby ending the drain on the gardens.[3]

The feast was scheduled for the day following the return of the hunters, even though the Karohi-teri had not yet arrived. Kąobawä and his group were so anxious to rid themselves of their ravenous guests by this time that they decided to hold a separate feast for the Karohi-teri on the day following the departure of the Mahekodo-teri. This would involve a considerable amount of extra work, but they were more than willing to

[3] I have seen several instances of Yąnomamö groups getting rid of visitors who have joined them semipermanently by holding a feast in their honor; when the ceremonial food is presented, the visitors are obliged to leave.

11: Chagnon E-5 (1964-1968) 1968 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18



By 8:00 A.M. the going-home food had been presented to the visitors, and the trade had been conducted. Had the visitors been polite, they would have left for home at that time. Instead, they decided to stay and witness the second, smaller, feast that Kaobawä was going to conduct for the Karohi-teri, who had not arrived in time for the major event. This capped the series of insults the visitors had heaped upon Kaobawä's group. The visitors were warned that if they should stay, the would be expected to fight in a chest-pounding duel.

It was obvious now that the visitors were looking for trouble, and Kaobawä's group was obliged to react or be subject to even further intimidation. Hence, the challenge to pound chests. At this point the visitors broke camp and departed, much to the relief and joy of Kaobawä's group. In fact, they were pleased that they had been successful in intimidating their guests into leaving, and the men gloated over this accomplishment the rest of the day. They were convinced that their threats were credible enough to force their potential adversaries to withdraw, presumably because the Mahekodo-teri felt they were inferior in strength.

Kaobawä and his group held another feast for the Karohi-teri that same day, but without the assistance of the Lower Bisaasi-teri who left shortly after the previous feast terminated.

## The Chest-pounding Duel

The feast for Karohi-teri was essentially the same as the one for the Mahekodo-teri and Boreta-teri. When the dancing was over and darkness fell, the men began to chant again. The first pair of chanters had not completed their rhythmic presentation when the jungle around the village erupted with hoots and screams, causing all of the people in the village to jump from their hammocks and arm themselves. When the men had found their arrows and were prepared, they began yelling back at the unseen guests, rattling the shafts of their arrows together or against their bows and/or pounding the heads of axes against pieces of firewood or on the ground to make noise. The Boreta-teri and Mahekodo-teri had returned to accept the chest-pounding challenge and entered the village, each man brandishing his axe, club, or bow and arrows. They circled the village once, feinting attack on particular men among the hosts, then grouped at the center of the village clearing. The hosts surrounded them excitedly, dancing with their weapons poised to strike, then entering into the mass of bodies. Heated arguments about food theft and gluttony developed, and the hosts and guests threateningly waved their weapons in each other's faces. Within minutes the large group had bifurcated and the chest-pounding began. The Karohi-teri aided Kaobawä and his followers, whose joint numbers were even further swelled when the Lower Bisaasi-teri rushed to the village after hearing the commotion. There were about sixty adult men on each side in the fight, divided into two arenas, each comprised of hosts and guests. Two men, one from each side, would step into the center of the milling, belligerent crowd of weapon-wielding partisans, urged on by their comrades. One would step up, spread his legs apart, bare his chest, and hold his arms behind his back, daring the other to hit him. The opponent would size him up, adjust the man's chest or arms so as to give himself the greatest advantage when he struck, and then step back to deliver his close-fisted blow. The striker would painstakingly adjust

Binasi-teri, for example, wanted to get rid of the Monou-teri, they would hold a feast in their honor. When the going-home food was presented to them, they had no alternative but to leave. It would have been insulting to remain after the food was presented. In between their moves they returned to their own producing site to collect plantains and carry them to their new garden. They subsisted there off the food they carried with them.

The Monou-teri soon resented being treated like pariahs by their allies and began to regain their courage. Much of this treatment was due to the fact that they failed to chase the raiders when Damowŕ was slain, displaying cowardice instead of ferocity. Many of the men in the Binasi-teri groups resented the Monou-teri for this and were not timid about displaying their disgust. The Monou-teri were a burden, as they rarely helped at expanding Binasi-teri's gardens and ate a good deal of the time.

The raid Kąobawŕ organized to revenge Damowŕ's death took place late in April. The Shamatari allies—Mĳamĳböwei-teri and Reyalöwei-teri—were invited to participate, but they failed to send a contingency. As allies never really trust each other, the raid was delayed because some of the Binasi-teri suspected that their allies were waiting for the raiders to leave so that they could descend on the poorly protected women and make off with captives. Finally, a few of them did arrive and the *waya itou* (warrior line-up) got under way. Still, the Binasi-teri feared treachery on the part of their Shamatari friends, so the men of Lower Binasi-teri decided to stay home and protect the women left behind by the Monou-teri and Upper Binasi-teri raiders. A small feast was held to entertain the visiting Shamatari allies.

On the afternoon of the feast a grass dummy was set up in the village, and the men who were to participate in the raid conducted a mock attack on the dummy, which was supposed to represent the body of a Patanowŕ-teri man. They painted themselves black, crept slowly around the village with bows and arrows ready, searching for the tracks of the enemy. They converged at one point, spread out, crept toward the dummy, and, at Kąobawŕ's signal, let fly with a volley of arrows. The Yąnomamö are good archers. None of the arrows missed its mark, and the dummy, looking like a pincushion, toppled ominously to the ground, a dozen or more bamboo-tipped arrows protruding from it. Then the raiders screamed and ran out of the village, simulating their retreat from the enemy. They drifted back into the village, one at a time or in small groups, and retired to their hammocks to wait for darkness.

The village became unusually quiet shortly after dark. Suddenly, the stillness was pierced by an animal-like noise, half-scream and half-growl, as the first raider marched slowly out to the center of the village, clacking his arrows against his bow, growling his individualized fierce noise, usually a mimic of a carnivore: a wasp, or a buzzard. At this signal—not knowing fully what to expect and a little nervous—I crept from my own hammock and went to the center of the village with my tape recorder. The other raiders joined the first man, coming one at a time after short intervals, each clacking his arrows and growling some hideous noise. Kąobawŕ stood by and made sure the line was straight and faced the direction of the enemy; he would push or pull the individual warriors until they formed a perfectly straight line, joining them after the last one took his place.

The procession to the line-up took about twenty minutes, as about 50 or so men participated (see Fig. 5-2). When the last one was in line, the murmurs among the